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For Special issue: Debating the Cultural Turn

Essay title:

Systems and Boundaries in International History

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Abstract:

The recent transnational, global and cultural turns have challenged international historians to reconsider the approach, purpose and value of their field. Although the new trends are beneficial to the extent that they challenge the premise that the nation state should be the primary framework of historical inquiry, the boundaries of international history have expanded too far and that the cultural turn's preoccupation with national discourses at the expense of international structures and processes is diverting the field away from the analysis of the causes of war and the conditions of peace. I will argue that international history should distinguish itself from global and transnational history by drawing clear yet open disciplinary boundaries. Every field of inquiry needs some consensus about what it is, where it is going and why, in other words, an identity, purpose and values. I will argue that what defines international history is its focus on the origins, structures, processes and outcomes of international politics, above all the causes of war and the conditions of peace.

Keywords: international history, transnational-global history, cultural turn, systemic approach

The debate about what international historians do, how they do it, why, and the value of the knowledge they create prompted by recent historiographical trends such as the cultural turn has benefited the field. For example the study of cultural diplomacy and cultural transfer between states has expanded to include the culture of diplomatic practice.¹ The cultural turn has also prompted a broader debate about fundamental epistemic and methodological issues in diplomatic and international history.² Similarly, the global and transnational turns have shown that the complex webs of non-national interactions that made the modern world were richer and much more transformative than any analysis of state-to-state diplomacy would have revealed.³ Yet, as a practitioner, I am concerned that the boundaries of international history have expanded too far and that the cultural turn's preoccupation with national discourses at the expense of international structures and processes is diverting the field away from the analysis of the causes of war and the conditions of peace. A century after the outbreak of the First World War, the danger of major war may have receded but it has not vanished.⁴ The conflict in the Ukraine, endemic wars in the Middle East, maritime disputes in South East Asia and global arms rivalry remind us that the imperatives and ideals that inspired the study of international history a century ago remain pertinent today.

In my contribution to this special issue, I will argue that international history should distinguish itself from global and transnational history by drawing clear yet open disciplinary boundaries. Every field of inquiry needs some consensus about what it is, where it is going and why, in other words, an identity, purpose and values. I will argue that what defines international history is its focus on the origins, structures,

processes and outcomes of international politics, above all the causes of war and the conditions of peace. In resisting the various turns, I believe that there is a danger that this essay will be misread as a defence of policy-making narratives derived from the 'objective' facts to be found only in official papers and as a refutation of theory. These are not my arguments. What I applaud in the recent historiographical trends is their rejection of the nation state as the primary frame of analysis. In my view, the history of international politics is too often written from a single national-diplomatic perspective and without **an explicit conception** of international politics. What the field needs is a revitalisation of the internationalist values and the systemic approach to international politics first elaborated by its founders a century ago. In the first part of this essay, I will set out the systemic approach to the history of international relations. In the second part, I will assess the benefits and drawbacks of the recent historiographical turns.

Although diplomatic history has nineteenth-century roots in the work of the great Prussian historian Leopold von Ranke, international history emerged in Britain in the aftermath of the Great War as a branch of what Donald Cameron Watt called 'disaster studies'.⁵ In other words, international history was born of the search for the causes of the war in the resolve that such a cataclysm should never reoccur. The founders of international history (and international relations) were turn-of-the-century British liberal intellectuals, public figures and philanthropists who proposed a new world organisation to preserve the peace once the war was over. These progressive thinkers saw the origins of the war not in the policies or actions of any one great power, but in what the philosopher Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson described in the title of his 1917 book as *The European Anarchy*. For Dickinson and others, in what became the League of Nations movement, the unbridled pursuit by the great powers of their selfish policies generated the forces of nationalism, imperialism and militarism, which

conspired in the summer of 1914 to cause a great war.⁶ The establishment of the League of Nations at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 offered these thinkers and political activists some hope that the international anarchy could be quelled through collective security and the rule of law, but the bellicose public outcry that year for a punitive peace to be imposed on Germany pointed in a more ominous direction. To promote public reconciliation in Europe and to underpin the League of Nations with scholarly research, internationalist-minded benefactors invested in the 'scientific' study of international affairs, including the endowment of new professorships. In 1919, for example, the Welsh industrialist David Davies endowed the Woodrow Wilson chair in international politics at the University College of Aberystwyth. Six years later the Scottish philanthropist Daniel Stevenson endowed a professorship at the newly established British [later Royal] Institution of International Affairs, Chatham House.⁷ In 1932, the Stevenson chair in international history moved to the London School of Economics, where it became Britain's top appointment in the field.

It is worth reflecting on what Stevenson wanted the chair holders to do because his goals exemplify the motives and values that inspired what was *the* international turn in history. During the late nineteenth century the writing of triumphalist national histories was central to the 'invention' of nation-states and national identities.⁸ Stevenson and others in his intellectual set believed that this type of chauvinistic nationalism transmitted through the writing and teaching of history in Europe had stoked antagonisms conducive to war. National history, he argued, had created 'among the peoples from childhood onwards a spirit of antipathy, ill-will and even hatred of other peoples ... [he was] convinced that the teaching of history *internationally and as far as practicable without bias* would tend to substitute for this spirit a spirit of international co-operation, peace and good will ...'.⁹ In the tradition of von Ranke,

Stevenson wanted historians to critically engage multiple archives, but without the Prussian's glorification of the nation-state as the vanguard of modernity. This international turn in history, the Scottish philanthropist hoped, would enlighten future generations about 'how other nations interpreted history in its relation to Great Britain as opposed to the usual method by which history [was] taught *only from the point of view of one country*'.¹⁰

One might dismiss Stevenson's desire for peace through a cosmopolitan curriculum as detached from the realities of power politics and typical of what E. H. Carr criticised in 1939 in *The Twenty Years' Crisis* as 'utopian' thinking about international affairs. Yet scholars now challenge the myth of a 'first great debate' in international relation theory between starry-eyed 'idealists' and hard-nosed 'realists'. Carr's categorisation, they contend, was a rhetorical device he used to lump together a rich and sophisticated variety of liberal thought about war prevention that he disagreed with.¹¹ We need not resolve this debate about a realist-idealist divide to recognise that Stevenson for idealistic reasons promoted a methodology of enduring practical value. Multi-archival research does offer scholars a dispassionate and systematic analytical perspective on the unfolding of international events. At the time Stevenson and others championed the international turn in the study of foreign affairs, governments tried to manipulate the historical debate about the war's origins for patriotic purposes. The defeated and victorious powers alike published selected volumes of diplomatic documents from their archives to absolve themselves of responsibility for the outbreak of the war. This sudden and unprecedented publication of secret official papers by most of the great powers had the unintended consequence of helping to establish international history as a field in its own right. During the interwar years, the published official papers also helped to form a consensus among scholars that war had come not

as the result of a premeditated plan hatched in Berlin, but inadvertently in the midst of a great power crisis that had spun out control.¹²

The subsequent debate about Germany's 'war guilt' illustrates the way in which the historiography divided into national and international approaches to archival research and to the conceptualisation of international politics. Some scholars concentrated on German policy-making and German sources. The most important work of this type was Fritz Fischer's *Griff nach der Weltmacht* and his *Krieg der Illusionen*. Challenging the consensus of the interwar years, Fischer argued that German leaders had launched a pre-planned war in 1914. His books, especially the second, not only laid bare what he saw as damning evidence from German archives that revealed, among other things, that the Kaiser and his advisors had decided on war in 1912, but Fischer also argued that Imperial Germany's aggression abroad sprang from the ruling elite's efforts to avert social and economic change at home. At a time when historians turned away from traditional political history to the novel methodologies of social and economic history, the thesis that domestic policy determined foreign policy (*der Primat der Innenpolitik*) inspired a generation of scholars to delve deep into the internal structural sources of German imperialism.¹³ In contrast, the international approach analysed the *interaction* of decisions and actions by all the powers reconstructed from documents drawn from multiple state archives. The classic work of this type is Luigi Albertini's three-volume study of the July 1914 crisis, which was published in Italy in 1942-43 and translated into English in the 1950s. The most recent example of the international approach is Christopher Clark's *The Sleepwalkers: How Europe Went to War in 1914*. Albertini and Clark place the largest share of responsibility for the war on Germany's leaders, but they also show that Berlin was not solely responsible for the war. The foreign policies of Britain, France and Russia, especially their disregard for

Austria-Hungary's mounting security crisis in the Balkans, affected the decisions made in Berlin and Vienna. From the international and comparative standpoint, the war was initiated by a complex and cumulative interplay of decisions and actions that raised the willingness of all the powers to run risks and to play for ever-higher stakes that fateful summer.¹⁴

My goal in contrasting the two approaches is not to suggest that we should dispense with national history, but instead to underscore the centrality of multi-archival research and a conception of what the states system is in international history. Fischer and his followers enhanced our understanding of how foreign policies are made by showing us that we need to take into account a wide range of domestic actors and influences on policy-making, but any analysis that seeks the causes of wars in the internal malfunctions of a single state is self-limiting. A single-state analysis cannot capture the interactive dynamics of arms rivalry, alliance politics and imperialism that for instance had so profoundly marred the global scene before 1914, nor how international relations shape the internal politics of states. What prompted Stevenson and other liberal internationalists to promote the League of Nations was their conviction that arms races, rival alliances and rabid nationalism were not simply the consequences of wicked and war-like states or statesmen, but instead features of a chaotic and unprincipled states system.¹⁵ Stevenson advocated multi-national and multi-archival research as the most empirically sound method to fully comprehend these war-promoting dysfunctions and as a step to addressing them through the collective management of world politics. A research technique alone, however, does not define a field of inquiry. Reliable historical knowledge is produced when understanding acquired from the critical analysis of primary sources converges with theoretical explanations of how the world works. Stevenson advocated the empirical method, but

others of his intellectual milieu such as the jurist James Bryce, the economist J. A. Hobson and philosopher Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson helped to lay down the conceptual foundations of the field's object of inquiry, the international system.

These early thinkers identified anarchy, the absence of an all-powerful rule-enforcing authority to impose order, as the defining condition of international politics.¹⁶ According to the orthodox accounts of the rise of modern international politics in history and international relations, the insecurity of anarchy drove the armed rivalry among the sovereign political communities that arose in Europe through the competitive process of state-formation from the late fifteenth century as the Holy Roman Empire and Christendom splintered.¹⁷ Why the European idea of the nation-state **triumphed globally as the ordering principle in international law** for people, territory and politics from the sixteenth to the twenty-first century is a complex, contingent and contested story.¹⁸ What is not contested is that state sovereignty has never been absolute, and that states have functioned as parts of a larger, and over the last three centuries an increasingly integrated, international system.¹⁹ As theorists point out, an international system exhibits two defining features. First, because it is an interconnected whole, change in one part of a system affects other parts. Second, the rapid interaction of conflicting policies and actions of major international actors in the system produces effects that are *independent* of the expectations and intentions of any actor. Political scientists have done the most work in elaborating this *systemic approach* to the study of international relations.²⁰ To my mind, the systemic approach is central to the question of what international history is because explaining the persistence of war and periods of relative peace requires the analysis of the structures, processes and effects of international systems as interconnected wholes.

For international historians the principal methodological implication of the systemic approach is that a conception of how states systems form, function and change over time is needed to make sense of multiple national archives. Pure empiricism would be naive. Even if one possessed all the languages and boundless time and energy needed to assemble all the available records pertinent to a particular historical episode or period in international affairs, the resulting hotchpotch would only convey so much. One would learn a great plurality of subjective views on the unfolding of interstate relations, but participants could not have grasped the whole of what was occurring and how others saw it, or could have known all the forces and dynamics at play, and much of what was widely understood (the 'rules of the game') was not written down. A theory is required to select, interpret and make sense of the archives and the documents they contain and to frame explanations for why things occurred the way they did and with what results.²¹ The idea that the condition of anarchy locked states into an unending struggle for power and security (vividly described as the 'perpetual quadrille' in A.J.P. Taylor's *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe, 1848-1914*) provided historians with an elementary framework.²² Anarchy, hegemony, the security dilemma and the balance of power likewise became core concepts in international relations theory, especially for classical and neo-realist thinkers. Liberal theorists later argued that anarchy did not preclude the formation of stable world orders (what Hedley Bull called the 'anarchical society') through institution building and economic integration. More recently, constructivists, who draw on the theoretical insights of sociology and anthropology, have described the international system as an inter-subjective construct mutually constituted by states (a theoretical point pithily expressed by Alexander Wendt's phrase 'anarchy is what states make of it').²³ What these theoretical traditions offer historians of international relations are useful conceptualisations of how international systems

form, function and change over time. I am not suggesting that historians should follow them slavishly, but instead we should employ them heuristically in a creative tension between the empirical interpretations, explanations and source analysis of history and the explanatory and constitutive theorising of political science.²⁴

In fact, by tradition historians are methodologically inclined to combine the material-structural focus of realism and the ideational emphasis of liberalism and constructivism to account for change in international politics. The exemplar of this type of conceptually sophisticated international history is Paul Schroeder's magisterial study of the Vienna peace, *The Transformation of European Politics, 1763-1848*.²⁵ Schroeder's thesis is that 1813-15 was a decisive turning point from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century systems, a transformation from a predatory war-prone balance of power among the great powers to a cooperative political equilibrium.²⁶ What is most pertinent to my argument about the necessary relationship between theory and sources in international history is Schroeder's conceptualisation of the international system as not simply an array of interacting political units and the relative distribution of power among them, but also 'the constituent rules of a practice or a civic association: the understandings, assumptions, learned skills and responses, rules, norms, procedures, etc. which agents acquire and use in pursuing their individual divergent aims within the framework of a shared practice.'²⁷ For Schroeder a 'systemic analysis' determines how the game of international politics was played and the outcomes it produced, and how the rules shaped, enabled and limited the actions of the players.

What places Schroeder's work firmly in the tradition of international history as it was initially elaborated a century ago is his assertion of 'the superiority of systemic-level explanations and structural analysis over [state-level] explanations of international politics'.²⁸ Appreciating that the dynamics of international politics work

autonomously from what goes on within even the most powerful states does not imply that we need to adopt a crude form of the primacy of foreign policy (*der Primat der Aussenpolitik*).²⁹ Few if any international historians today would assert that the analysis of internal and external politics can be entirely separated. For example, Matthew Connolly's fine study of how the liberationists won Algeria's post-1945 fight for independence from France at the international level in a struggle that entangled the domestic and external spheres of not only the main protagonists, but also those of adjacent countries and the United States and also involved non-state actors, illustrates that historians ignore either sphere at their peril.³⁰ In their study of US Cold War policy, Campbell Craig and Fredrik Logevall employ the term 'intermestic' for instances when the international and the domestic in national policy-making are so intertwined that trying to disentangle them makes no analytical sense.³¹ Yet arguing that domestic and international politics interacted in important ways, or pointing to moments when national politics or the personal or cultural predispositions of a particular policy maker overrides external factors in policy making, does not mean that the domestic and international carry equal causal weight in explaining world politics, or even for political changes that are usually explained in national terms. As Michael Reynolds shows in his multi-archival study of the Russian and Ottoman empires from 1908 to 1918, the nationalisms that scholars usually credit for the collapse of the two empires did not simply arise from domestic pressures, but were instead generated by the conflict between them and shaped by aggressive geopolitical norms.³² Similarly, Eric Weitz argues that the Paris peace settlement of 1919-1923 legitimised a normative shift in the international system from the politics of territorial adjustments between multi-national, multi-confessional empires ruled by dynastic elites to the twentieth-century ideal of 'national homogeneity under the state'.³³ This precise alignment of territorial and

ethnographic norms as to what constituted the ideal political unit in the states system would have deadly ramifications from then on. What the examples of the relative peace of the Concert of Europe, the victory of the Algerian liberationists over superior French armed forces, the collapse of the Ottoman and Russian empires, and the shift in the ideal political order at the turn of the last century all share is that none of them can be explained by chronicling the intentions of officials and the policy choices made in foreign ministries or cabinet offices. This conceptual point is especially true of the most distinct of modern phenomena that blighted the international systems of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, arms races. While scholars debate how much arms races constrained or even determined state behaviour and how transformative they were in prompting the growth of 'military industrial complexes', there is no doubt that in the last century the dynamics of arms rivalry at times spiralled beyond the capacity of any national leader to control and that national leaders feared that they would mandate war.³⁴

Of course knowing how foreign policy was made and the mindsets and intentions of national leaders is important to explaining why a particular policy was pursued,³⁵ but what happens inside a state can only reveal so much about the constraints that the system placed on national goals and action and the possibilities it opened for statesmen, in other words the potential for the exercise of power. Power is the most universal and slippery of terms in the study of international relations. Scholars often confront the seeming paradox of unrealised power (usually attributed to a lack of will) and the way the 'weak' frustrate the 'strong' in diplomacy, war and in the struggle for authority and legitimacy. As theorists suggest, power is not a quality or possession of one actor, but a relationship among actors.³⁶ This insight again underlines the need to grasp world politics from multiple archives and perspectives if we are to understand the *extent* and

limits of national power. As Christopher Thorne, Akira Iriye and Robert J. McMahon have warned, uni-archival diplomatic history can breed a kind of national self-absorption, in which the tangled interplay of different centres of potential power and influence by a plurality of actors of international relations is reduced to a series of bilateral relationships that radiate out from one capital.³⁷ This proclivity is particularly evident in US diplomatic history, which is infused with a sense that Washington has been at the centre of world events since the 1940s as well as an implicit faith in American exceptionalism.³⁸ In a recent survey of the field, for example, Thomas W. Zeiler described US diplomatic history as ‘a clearing house of sorts for work on America and the world’. While praising international historians for revealing how foreign influences affected ‘US projects abroad,’ he cautions against too much *internationalisation* because of the ‘risks of losing sight of the Americanness that is the very character of US diplomatic history.’³⁹ One searches Zeiler’s otherwise fascinating essay in vain for any reflection on whether the America-centric character of US diplomatic history may distort how Americans understand world politics by encouraging what Stanley Hoffmann described as a proclivity for ‘solipsistic exuberance’.⁴⁰ Ultimately, the fixation of diplomatic history of any national brand with national policy-making obscures the interactive nature of international relations. It portrays what happens on the international stage as a mere result of the dysfunctional political regime of one power,⁴¹ the personal or cultural inclinations of policy elites, or of the wisdom or folly of a few politicians. In British diplomatic history, this distortion pervades the long-exhausted debate about the British prime minister Neville Chamberlain’s efforts to ‘appease’ Adolf Hitler.⁴² Ironically, the one conceit that historians who criticise the policies of Chamberlain share with him is an exaggerated sense that Europe’s fate in the 1930s rested on what would be decided in London.⁴³ The

source of the distortion is part methodological, part ideological. As its critics maintain, the study of high politics has a built-in bias for elevating human agency to the status of historical prime mover because it explains change as a consequence of the thoughts, deeds and virtues of elites. During the Cold War, this inherent bias was reinforced by the ideological conflict against the Soviet Union: western diplomatic historians played their own part in the struggle in championing the cause of individual liberty over the collectivism and historical determinism of Marxist-Leninism in the historiography by asserting the primacy of human agency and contingency over structures and impersonal forces.⁴⁴

While historians of national policy making tend to inflate the power and importance of the state, the reverse is true of global-transnational historians. By highlighting the growth of transnational movements, coalitions and actors, these scholars write the state out of history. As a corrective to the dominance of state-centric historiography, the transnational and global turns have been an enormous benefit by showing how increasing flows of people, goods and ideas drove the integrating processes we now call globalisation. Transnational and global historians elucidate border defying phenomena such as migration, political activism, social, cultural and religious movements, the creation of intellectual, scientific and professional networks, the spread of organised crime and terrorist groups, cultural encounters, clashes and diffusion, the expansion of world trade, global finance and multi-national corporations, and the rise of international institutions and non-governmental organisations.⁴⁵ Transnational historians have explored in depth and detail what the 'English School' of international relations theorists called 'international society',⁴⁶ and they have traced how human rights norms and grass roots activism swayed state policy.⁴⁷ The analytical problem with the transnational turn, however, is how to relate the transnational sphere

to the states system. On this score, a recent analysis by Ann-Christina L. Knudsen and Karen Gram-Skjoldager of the narrative structures of transnational histories is revealing about the underlying attitudes and analytical assumptions of transnational and global historians: when the state appears in transnational narratives at all, the authors contend, it is usually in the shape of an 'opponent' to be overcome by 'heroic' transnational actors or as an obstacle to be pushed aside by the unstoppable forces of global integration.⁴⁸

One can of course simply argue that expanding transnational linkages enmeshed modern states in a stabilising web of interdependence. Yet, it is equally plausible (and I would add much more credible) to argue that the transnational sphere expanded over the last two centuries more as a result than as a cause of a more managed and stable order among states. It was no coincidence that the field of transnational history took off in the 1990s. At that time many believed that the end of total wars and the Cold War would allow the globalisation of the late nineteenth century to resume apace. Ever accelerating flows of people, capital and ideas would erase borders. In the coming post-territorial order, geo-politics would yield to geo-economics, global governance would pass to non-governmental organisations and global civil society would act as the world's conscience and curb the actions of states.⁴⁹ In the last decade the post-Cold War optimism that inspired this sort of thinking has abated. States and nationalism are resurgent. The way in which governments have coped with the challenge of the Internet tells a larger story about the resilience of state power in this time of globalisation. The Internet was at first heralded as the 'information superhighway' that would annihilate borders and liberate people from the leviathan, but now major governments have asserted state sovereignty over what is a globe-spanning patchwork of linked national networks governed by national laws and policed by national law enforcement agencies.

The Internet, moreover, has evolved into a competitive arena for traditional interstate activities such as espionage, covert operations and political warfare.⁵⁰ The proliferation of cross-border connections and non-state actors have been neglected in the historiography of the modern world, but that does not mean that the states system and the horrific violence it can produce are less significant or demanding of historical inquiry than we had previously thought. Indeed, the dark side of globalisation – one that global and transnational historians neglect – has been the escalating lethality, speed and global reach of the nation-state's means of destruction, a development that has not ceased since the explosion of the first atomic bombs over Japan in 1945. Since the 1990s some historians appear to have forgotten that the great expansion of the transnational sphere from the 1970s occurred in the shadow of a strategic nuclear deadlock between the superpowers and their allies. As Holger Nehring has argued in a wide-ranging review of *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, in their rush to embrace novel approaches and to demonstrate the conflict's relevance to every aspect of the post-1945 world, historians have 'tamed' the most dangerous confrontation in human history by 'decentring' the Cold War away from its military and diplomatic core. Cold War historians, Nehring concludes, 'have lost sight of one of the key elements of the "Cold War": its war-like character.'⁵¹

The issue of what the central focus of international history should be takes me to the cultural turn. Most of the debate about the application of cultural approaches to national policy has raged among historians of American foreign relations. As it is framed in the pages of *Diplomatic History*, this debate pits traditionalists against culturalists, with the former upholding at least the ideal of objectivity, the effort to grasp the intentions of leading actors from the rational arguments contained in the archival sources and the policy-relevance of diplomatic history, while the latter assert that

knowledge is discursively constructed, that policy-makers interpret the world through historically contingent frameworks of meaning that shape behaviour in significant yet often unconscious ways, and that the goal of policy-relevance encourages the reproduction of the underlying political assumptions that legitimate power.⁵² This divide reflects an ideological/political one, with the traditionalists leery about the 'de-centring' (or, as they see it, diminishing) of the role of the US in shaping the last century and the culturalists critical of 'Cold War triumphalism'.⁵³ Add to that the dominance of the cultural approach in the historical profession generally in the United States and in some parts of Europe, which places young scholars in the field under pressure to connect their research to wider historiographical trends and to impress hiring and promotion committees.

These political and professional issues aside, the central question is whether the cultural turn offers a transformative critique of the field's concepts and methods. In my view, the answer is mixed. Certainly one benefit of the cultural turn has been a renewed and more systematic study of the power of ideas in foreign affairs, especially of values, beliefs and identity.⁵⁴ As well as familiar analytical categories such as ideology and geopolitics, cultural historians explore how memory, metaphors, religion, and the rhetoric of class, race, ethnicity and gender have guided decision makers and legitimised the policies of empire, war and bellicose posturing on the world's stage. Culturalists have questioned the realist-behaviourist premise that officials rationally calculate responses to the world in relation to a fixed national interest.⁵⁵ Many scholars consider discursively constructed national identities key factors in how states interact.⁵⁶ The new studies of emotions, sexuality and statecraft, moreover, are a reminder that officials were not policy-spouting robots, but human beings with passions, appetites, fears and biases.⁵⁷ Still, as critics often point out, these insights are

not especially novel, though some of the analytic categories cultural historians employ are new. Diplomatic historians **such as Zara Steiner** have long sought to grasp the complex motives of policy makers, to reconstruct the rich and varied mental universes they inhabited and to understand how social status concepts such as honour, rank, reputation and prestige motivated foreign policy elites.⁵⁸ Critics of the cultural turn in diplomatic history also argue that culturalists do not connect the discursive formations that they illuminate to the dynamic ways in which policy was made. According to critics, culture in this way thus becomes a static, vague and all-pervasive influence on the foreign policy decision making with the result that the causality of cultural beliefs are exaggerated at the expense of wider social structures and material conditions.⁵⁹

While I agree with these criticisms, my prime reservation about the cultural turn is the preoccupation of culturalists with *national* policy and policy makers. In their effort to show that officials were driven by complex motives and biases, which have not often figured in diplomatic narratives and which are not spelled out in the archives, and to illustrate the subjective and the self-interested element in the perception of external threats and the articulation of national interests, culturalists end up – to use Volker Dikpat's phrase - 'universalising the domestic'.⁶⁰ The idea is not new. The argument that ruling elites configure perceptions of the external world to uphold the *status quo* internally dates to nineteenth century radical critiques of the German empire.⁶¹ Fischer's thesis inspired a generation of historians in the 1960s and 1970s who saw geopolitical explanations for German decision-making in 1914 as nothing more than an attempt to shift Germany's war guilt abroad.⁶² The cultural turn in US foreign policy history stems from a similar mistrust of external, interactive explanations for the way in which American foreign policy elites have described and reacted to the world. While interrogating the motives and unspoken assumptions of policy elites and identifying

internal pressures on foreign policy is laudable, the advent of this cultural variant of *der Primat der Innenpolitik* is nevertheless conceptually retrograde. That the international constituted a political realm distinct yet not detached from the domestic was the chief insight of the founders of the field. Interstate rivalry compelled foreign policy elites to look outward from the state and to be especially sensitive to the geographic, economic and dynamic power relations that shaped the external world. The states system, they lamented, even had the power to impose its own rules and norms of behaviour. As Lowes Dickinson argued in 1917, whatever their personal, moral and (we can certainly add) cultural inclinations, the international anarchy turned all statesmen into Machiavellians.⁶³ Cultural historians may have raised our appreciation for the cultural sources of foreign policy and shown that the discursive construction of national interests contain important unspoken cultural assumptions, but decision makers through the medium of language are still ensnared by autonomous social structures formed at the international level. The dynamics of international systems and the way in which states have responded to them may not be reducible to a few law-like theoretical propositions, but that does not mean that systems never existed at all.

Critics of the cultural turn also contend that culturalists simply set out the discursive context of national policy without explaining action and change in the world, while the culturalists reply that action can only be fully explained in the context of socially constructed belief systems that make social action meaningful.⁶⁴ The culturalists are I think correct to assert that agency and structure are inseparable and that diplomatic historians are prone to inflate the efficacy of human action.⁶⁵ However, their preoccupation with national culture and statecraft, the fact that they draw theoretical inspiration from literary and cultural studies rather than from international relations theory, and their lack of interest in the ideational and material structures that

shape the world in which states exist, renders them ill-equipped to explain causes and outcomes in international politics.⁶⁶ Advocates of the cultural approach are probably content with this situation because their identity as epistemic rebels rests on decentring US diplomatic history from war and geopolitics in order to critique the cultural and ideological predispositions of American foreign policy elites. This is regrettable because great insights about causation in world politics can come from an understanding of the dialectical interactions of agents and structures and the constitutive practices (war, trade and diplomacy) of states in the international systems.⁶⁷ Though not self-styled culturalists, the way in which Paul Schroeder, Michael Reynolds and Eric Weitz analyse the systemic effects of normative change in the history of international politics, which I set out earlier in this essay, illustrates that historians can account for the agential power of ideas without dispensing with individual and collective human agency, social structures and material conditions.⁶⁸

Debate about purpose and values is the lifeblood of any field of inquiry, but the idiom of historiographic turns has an unfortunate 'foreclosure effect' on the insights, aims and values of earlier generations.⁶⁹ In international history, the global, transnational and cultural turns have blurred the field's boundaries and shifted attention away from the causes of war and the conditions of peace. Methodological innovation and pluralism are welcome, but the danger of a larger scope is a loss of coherence and purpose. While transnational historians neglect the relationship between the states system and the transnational sphere, practitioners of the cultural turn in US diplomatic history nationalise the international. War, diplomacy and the interaction of policy elites are not the only activities of significance in the history of our globalising world, but the horrific potential of the states system for violence must be the prime concern for any academic endeavour that adopts the epithet 'international'. A century

ago, the founders of international history sought to understand what had caused the First World War to help prevent future catastrophes.⁷⁰ The concepts and methods that they began to elaborate were not based on a wholesale acceptance of the assumptions and biases in the state papers. Instead, they rejected the inherent nationalism and national perspective of the diplomatic records and appreciated that national leaders were subject to external structures and forces beyond their control. In these particularly nationalistic and violent times, what the field needs is to renew the sense of mission and purpose that inspired its foundation.

¹ See for example Jessica C.E. Gienow-Hecht, 'Cultural Transfer', in Michael J. Hogan and Thomas G. Paterson, *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 257-78; Markus Mösslang and Torsten Riotte, *The Diplomats' World: A Cultural History of Diplomacy, 1815-1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

² For introductions to the 'cultural turn' in international history, see Jessica C.E. Gienow-Hecht and Frank Schumacher, eds., *Culture and International History* (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2004) and Andrew J. Rotter, 'Culture', in Patrick Finney, ed., *International History* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2005), 267-99.

³ Advocates of transnational and world/global history differ about how to define these overlapping fields: see Patricia Clavin, 'Defining Transnationalism', *Contemporary European History*, 14 (2005), 421-39; C.A. Bayly, Sven Beckert, Matthew Connelly, Isabel Hofmeyr, Wendy Kozol, and Patricia Seed, 'On Transnational History', *American Historical Review*, 111 (2006), 1441-64; Akira Iriye, *Global and Transnational History*:

The Past, Present, and Future (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2012); Christopher Bayly, 'History and World History', in Ulinka Rublack, ed, *A Concise Companion to History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 3-25; Michael Geyer and Charles Bright, 'World History in a Global Age', *American Historical Review* 100 (1995), 1034–60.

⁴ Raimo Vayrynen, *The Waning of Major War: Theories and Debates* (London: Routledge, 2005).

⁵ Donald Cameron Watt, *What about the People? Abstraction and Reality in History and the Social Sciences* (London, 1983). For the historiography of diplomatic and international history in France, Britain and the United States, see the chapters by Georges-Henri Soutou, Kathleen Burk and Michael H. Hunt in Wilfried Loth and Jürgen Osterhammel, eds, *Internationaler Geschichte: Themen, Ergebnisse, Aussichten* (Munich: Oldenbourg Wissenschaftsverlag, 2000) and Robert Frank, *Pour l'histoire des relations internationales* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2012), 5-40.

⁶ Jeanne Morefield, 'The Never-Satisfied Idealism of Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson', in Ian Hall and Lisa Hill, eds, *British International Thinkers from Hobbes to Namier* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2009), 207-26; Martin D. Dubin, 'Toward the Concept of Collective Security: The Bryce Group's "Proposals for the Avoidance of War," 1914-1917,' *International Organization* 24 (1970), 288-318; Casper Sylvest, *British Liberal Internationalism, 1880-1930: Making Progress?* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009); Glenda Sluga, *Internationalism in the Age of Nationalism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 11-44.

⁷ Brian Porter, 'David Davies and the Enforcement of Peace', in David Long and Peter Wilson, eds, *Thinkers of the Twenty Years' Crisis: Inter-War Idealism Reassessed* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 58-78.

⁸ Eric Hobsbawm, 'Mass-Producing Traditions: Europe, 1870-1914', in Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 263-306; John Breuilly, 'Nationalism and the Making of National Pasts' in Susana Carvalho and François Gemenne, eds, *Nations and their Histories Constructions and Representations* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2009), 7-28.

⁹ David Stevenson, 'Learning from the Past: the Relevance of International History', *International Affairs* 90 (2014), 5-22 [my emphasis].

¹⁰ Stevenson, 'Learning from the Past', 9 [my emphasis]; Leopold von Ranke and George C. Iggers, *The Theory and Practice of History* (London: Routledge, 2010). The idea that one could instil a sense of common community through an international turn in the writing of history was revived after 1945 in the UNESCO 'History of Humanity' project: see Paul Betts, 'Humanity's New Heritage: UNESCO and the Rewriting of World History', *Past and Present* 228 (2015), 249-85.

¹¹ Brian C. Schmidt, ed., *Where Are We Now in the Debate about the First Great Debate?* (London: Routledge, 2012).

¹² Keith Wilson, 'Governments, Historians, and Historical "Engineering"', in Keith Wilson, ed., *Forging the Collective Memory: Government and International Historians Through Two World Wars* (Oxford: Berghahn, 1996), 1-27; Annika Mombauer, *The Origins of the First World War: Controversies and Consensus* (London: Routledge, 2002).

¹³ Fritz Fischer, *Griff nach der Weltmacht: Die Kriegszielpolitik des kaiserlichen Deutschland 1914-18* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1961); and his *Krieg der Illusionen: Die deutsche Politik 1911 bis 1914* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1969); one classic *Primat der Innenpolitik* text is Hans-Ulrich, Wähler's *Das deutsche Kaiserreich, 1871-1918* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1973). On the Fisher controversy, see Stephan

Petzold, *Fritz Fischer and the Rise of Critical Historiography in West Germany, 1945–1966* (PhD thesis, Aberystwyth University, 2010); on the impact of the social sciences on German historiography, see Gilbert Ziebura, 'Die Rolle der Sozialwissenschaften in der westdeutschen Historiographie der internationalen Beziehungen', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, 16 (1990), 79-103.

¹⁴ Luigi Albertini [trans. by Isabella M. Massey], *Origins of the War of 1914* 3 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1952-57); Christopher Clark, *The Sleepwalkers: How Europe Went to War in 1914* (London: Penquin, 2012); on the recent historiography and the systemic approach, see William Mulligan, 'The Trial Continues: New Directions in the Study of the Origins of the First World War', *English Historical Review*, 129 (2014), 639-66.

¹⁵ Casper Sylvest, 'Continuity and Change in British Liberal Internationalism, c. 1900-1930', *Review of International Studies*, 31 (2005), 263-83.

¹⁶ Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson, *The International Anarchy: 1904-14* (London: MacMillan, 1926); Sylvest, 'Continuity and Change', 274-83; Brian C. Schmidt, *The Political Discourse of Anarchy: A Disciplinary History of International Relations* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1998), 157-62, 194-6; early international relations theorists in Britain and the US drew on the work of Thomas Hobbes: see David Armitage, 'Hobbes and the Foundations of Modern International Thought', in David Armitage, *Foundations of Modern International Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 59-74.

¹⁷ Historians and international relations scholars no longer see the Peace of Westphalia of 1648 as *the* moment of transition from the hierarchical medieval order to the anarchic states system but instead conceive of it as part of a longer process: see Peter H

Wilson, *The Thirty Years War: Europe's Tragedy* (London: Penguin, 2012), 751-73; Edward Keene, *Beyond the Anarchical Society: Grotius, Colonialism and Order in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 15-22; Benno Teschke, *The Myth of 1648: Class, Geopolitics and the Making of Modern International Relations* (London: Verso, 2003). Scholars have also investigated systems other than the European one: see for example John Anthony Pella, 'International Relations in Africa before the Europeans', *International History Review*, 37 (2015), 99-118 and Erik Ringmar, 'Performing International Systems: Two East-Asian Alternatives to the Westphalian Order', *International Organization*, 66 (2012), 1-25.

¹⁸ On the origins of sovereignty and the role of international law in constituting international systems, see James J. Sheehan, 'The Problem of Sovereignty in European History', *The American Historical Review* 111 (2006), 1-15; Hendrik Spruyt, *The Sovereign State and Its Competitors: An Analysis of Systems Change* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994); Martti Koskenniemi, *The Gentle Civilizer of Nations: The Rise and Fall of International Law 1870-1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); and Antony Angie, *Imperialism, Sovereignty and the Making of International Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Lauren Benton, *Law and Colonial Cultures: Legal Regimes in World History, 1400-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Lauren Benton, *A Search for Sovereignty: Law and Geography in European Empires, 1400-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

¹⁹ Philippe Contamine, ed., *War and Competition between States* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Hamish Scott, *The Birth of a Great Power System, 1740-1815* (London: Longmann, 2014); M.S. Anderson, *The Rise of Modern Diplomacy 1450-1919*

(London, 1993); Barry Buzan and Richard Little, *International Systems in World History: Remaking the Study of International Relations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000). Immanuel Wallerstein locates the rise of the modern states system within the larger development of global capitalism: 'The inter-state structure of the modern world-system', in Steve Smith, Ken Booth and Marysia Zalewski, eds, *International Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 87-107.

²⁰ On systems theories and international relations, see Martin Wight, *Systems of States* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1977); Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (London: Addison-Wesley, 1979); Robert Jervis, *System Effects: Complexity in Political Science and Social Life* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997); Buzan and Little, *International Systems in World History*. For the intellectual history of the states system, see Armitage, *Foundations of Modern International Thought* and Richard Devetak, 'Historiographical Foundations of Modern International Thought: Histories of the European States-System from Florence to Göttingen', *History of European Ideas*, 41 (2015), 62-77.

²¹ Mary Fulbrook, *Historical Theory: Ways of Imagining the Past* (London: Routledge, 2002).

²² A. J. P. Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe, 1848-1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1954), xix.

²³ Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948); Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study in Order and World Politics* (London: MacMillan, 1977); Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999). For an overview of international relations theories see Scott Burchill, Andrew Linklater, Richard

Devetak, Jack Donnelly, Matthew Paterson, Christian Reus-Smit and Jacqui True, *Theories of International Relations* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2005, 3rd edn).

²⁴ Colin Elman and Miriam F. Elman, eds, *Bridges and Boundaries: Historians, Political Scientists and the Study of International Relations* (Cambridge Mass.: MIT Press, 2001); Mark Trachtenberg, *The Craft of Diplomatic History: A Guide to Method* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006), 30-50.

²⁵ Paul Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics, 1763-1848* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994). A recent H-Diplo/ISSF review of Mark Jarrett, *The Congress of Vienna and Its Legacy: War and Great Power Diplomacy after Napoleon* (London: I B Tauris, 2013) and Jennifer Mitzen, *Power in Concert: The Nineteenth Century Origins of Global Governance* (Chicago: University Press, 2013) underscores the importance of a continuing dialogue between international historians and international relations scholars: H-Diplo ISSF Roundtable VII/11 (2015): <http://issforum.org/ISSF/PDF/ISSF-Roundtable-7-11.pdf>.

²⁶ Schroeder's work was the subject of a special issue of this journal, 'Paul W. Schroeder's International System', *International History Review* 16 (1994). Also Peter Krüger and Paul W. Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics, 1763-1848: Episode or Model in Modern History?* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002).

²⁷ Schroeder, *Transformation*, x.

²⁸ Schroeder, *Transformation*, x-xi.

²⁹ Brendan Simms surveys the debate in 'The Return of the Primacy of Foreign Policy', *German History*, 21 (2003), 275-91, and asserts its importance to understanding modern German and European history.

³⁰ Matthew J. Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution: Algeria's Fight for Independence and the Origins of the Post-Cold War Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

³¹ Campbell Craig and Fredrik Logevall, *America's Cold War* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2012).

³² Michael A. Reynolds, *Shattering Empires: The Clash and Collapse of the Ottoman and Russian Empires 1908-1918* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

³³ Eric Weitz, 'From the Vienna Congress to the Paris System: International Politics and the Entangled Histories of Human Rights, Forced Deportations and Civilizing Missions', *American Historical Review*, 113 (2008), 1313-43.

³⁴ Thomas Mahnken, Joseph Maiolo and David Stevenson, eds., *Arms Races in International Politics: From the Nineteenth to the Twenty-First Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016); James Ledbetter, *Unwarranted Influence: Dwight D. Eisenhower and the Military-Industrial Complex* (Oxford, 2011); John Barber and Mark Harrison, eds, *The Soviet Defence Industry Complex from Stalin to Krushchev* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 1999).

³⁵ The national history of policy making, national mentalities and diplomatic institutions can of course be written in the context of larger processes and structures in international politics: see Thomas G. Otte, 'Diplomacy and Decision-making', in Finney, *International History*, 36-57 and his *The Foreign Office Mind: The Making of British Foreign Policy, 1865-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); also Robert Frank, 'Mentalitäten, Vorstellungen und internationale Beziehungen', in Loth and Osterhammel, eds, *Internationaler Geschichte*, 159-85.

³⁶ For discussions of the concept of power see David Baldwin, 'Power Analysis and World Politics', *World Politics*, 31 (1979), 161-94; Lawrence Freedman, 'Strategic

Studies and the Problem of Power', in Lawrence Freedman, ed., *War, Strategy, and International Politics* (1992), 279–294; Christopher Clark, 'Power', in Rublack, *A Concise Companion to History*, 132–54.

³⁷ Christopher Thorne, *Border Crossings: Studies in International History* (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 1988), 9; Akira Iriye, 'Internationalizing International History', Thomas Bender, ed., *Rethinking American History in a Global Age* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002), 47–62; Robert J. McMahon, 'Toward a Pluralist Vision: The Study of American Foreign Relations as International History and National History', in Hogan and Paterson, *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations*, 35–39.

³⁸ Ian Tyrell, 'American Exceptionalism in an Age of International History', *American Historical Review*, 96 (1991), 1031–55.

³⁹ Thomas W. Zeiler, 'The Diplomatic Bandwagon: A State of the Field', *Journal of American History*, 95 (2009), 1053–73.

⁴⁰ Stanley Hoffmann, 'An American Social Science: International Relations', *Daedalus*, 106/3 (1977), 41–60.

⁴¹ Campbell and Logevall, for example, attempt to revive *der Primat der Innenpolitik* in *America's Cold War*. They argue that the international history approach underrates US power and the way in which US containment policy had in fact stabilised the international system by 1949. The next forty years of Cold War, they contend, was driven by a dysfunctional US national security policy-making process, which inflated the Soviet threat to sustain the military industrial complex. For a debate of their thesis, see *H-Diplo Roundtable Review*, 11/33 (2010) available at: <http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/roundtables/PDF/Roundtable-XI-33.pdf>

⁴² For a fine survey of the debate, see David Dutton, *Neville Chamberlain* (London: Routledge, 2001).

⁴³ For instance see R.A.C. Parker, *Chamberlain and Appeasement: British Policy and the Coming of the Second World War* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 1993); Frank McDonough, *Hitler, Chamberlain and Appeasement* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Keith Neilson, *Britain, Soviet Russia and the Collapse of the Versailles Order, 1919-1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

⁴⁴ For the impact of the Cold War on scholarly thought, see S M Amadae, *Rationalizing Capitalist Democracy: The Cold War Origins of Rational Choice Liberalism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003); George Steinmetz, ed., *The Politics of Method in the Human Sciences: Positivism and Its Epistemological Others* (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2005); and Peter Novick, *That Noble Dream: The 'Objectivity Question' and the American Historical Profession* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

⁴⁵ Titles in the *Palgrave Macmillan Transnational History Series* edited by Akira Iriye and Rana Mitter offer an overview of the new research themes. Also see Ann Curthoys and Marilyn Lake, eds, *Connected Worlds: History in Transnational Perspective* (Canberra, 2005); Gunilla Budde, Sebastian Conrad, and Oliver Janz, eds, *Transnationale Geschichte: Themen, Tendenzen und Theorien* (Göttingen, 2006).

⁴⁶ Tim Dunne, *Inventing International Society: A History of the English School* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 1998); Daniel Gorman, *The Emergence of International Society in the 1920s* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Thomas Davies, *NGOs: A New History of Transnational Civil Society* (London: Routledge, 2014); Patricia Clavin, *Securing the World Economy: The Reinvention of the League of Nations, 1920-1946* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

⁴⁷ For instance Akira Iriye, Petra Goedde and William I. Hitchcock, eds, *The Human Rights Revolution: An International History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

⁴⁸ Ann-Christina L. Knudsen and Karen Gram-Skjoldager, 'Historiography and Narration in Transnational History', *Journal of Global History*, 9 (2014), 143-61.

⁴⁹ David Armitage, 'Is There a Pre-history of Globalisation?' in his *Foundations of Modern International Thought*, 33-45.

⁵⁰ Tim Wu and Jack Goldsmith, *Who Controls the Internet? Illusions of a Borderless World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

⁵¹ Holger Nehring, 'What was the Cold War?' *English Historical Review*, 128 (2012), 920-49.

⁵² Contrast for instance Melvyn Leffler, 'New Approaches, Old Interpretations, and Prospective Reconfigurations,' *Diplomatic History*, 19 (1995), 173-96 with Robert S. Dean, 'Commentary: Tradition, Cause and Effect, and the Cultural History of International Relations', *Diplomatic History*, 24 (2000), 615-22.

⁵³ Ellen Schrecker, ed., *Cold War Triumphalism: The Misuse of History After the Fall of Communism* (New York: The New Press, 2004); Thomas A. Schwartz, 'Explaining the Cultural Turn – or Detour?', *Diplomatic History*, 31 (2007) 143-7; Jessica C. E. Gienow-Hecht, ed., *Decentering America* (New York: Berghahn, 2007); for a critique of decetering, see Frederik Logevall, 'Politics and Foreign Relations', *Journal of American History*, 95 (2009), 1074-8.

⁵⁴ Frank Ninkovich, 'No Post-Mortems for Postmodernism Please', *Diplomatic History*, 22 (1998), 458–60. The long dominance of the positivist-realist model in the American school of international relations theory also helps to explain the advent of the cultural

approach to US diplomatic history: Nicolas Guilhot, *The Invention of International Relations Theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011)

⁵⁵ For instance Alexander De Conde, *Ethnicity, Race and American Foreign Policy* (Boston, MA, 1992); David Campbell, *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy And The Politics Of Identity* (Minneapolis Minn., 1998); Kristin L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven Conn., 1998); Robert D. Dean, *Imperial Brotherhood: Gender and the Making of Cold War Foreign Policy* (Minneapolis Minn, 2003).

⁵⁶ For a study of identity and international relations in the early modern period, see Erik Ringmar, *Identity, Interest and Action: A Cultural Explanation of Sweden's Intervention in the Thirty Years War* (Cambridge, 1996).

⁵⁷ Frank Costigliola, "'Unceasing Pressure for Penetration": Gender, Pathology, and Emotion in George Kennan's Formation of the Cold War', *Journal of American History*, 83 (1997), 1309–39; Frank Costigliola, *Roosevelt's Lost Alliances: How Personal Politics Helped Start the Cold War* (Princeton NJ, 2013).

⁵⁸ As both David Reynolds, in 'International History, the Cultural Turn and the Diplomatic Twitch', *Cultural and Social History*, 3 (2006), 75–91, and Peter Jackson, in 'Pierre Bourdieu, the "Cultural Turn" and the Practice of International History', *Review of International Studies*, 34 (2008), 155–181, argue, historians in the United Kingdom such as Donald Cameron Watt, Zara Steiner, James Joll and Christopher Thorne all developed themes central to the cultural turn in diplomatic history.

⁵⁹ Reynolds, 'International History', 87–90; Jackson, 'Pierre Bourdieu, the "Cultural Turn"', 156–63; and Volker Dekpat's incisive analysis in 'Cultural Approaches to

International Relations: A Challenge?', in Gienow-Hecht and Schumacher, eds, *Culture and International History*, 175-95.

⁶⁰ Dekpat, 'Cultural Approaches', 185-6, and Jackson, 'Pierre Bourdieu, the "Cultural Turn"', 161-2.

⁶¹ Nicholas Stargardt, *The German Idea of Militarism: Radical and Socialist Critics 1866-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

⁶² For example: Helmut Böhme, "'Primat" und "Paradigmata": Zur Entwicklung einer bundes-deutschen Zeitgeschichtsschreibung am Beispiel des Ersten Weltkrieges', in Hartmut Lehman, ed., *Historikerkontroversen* (Göttingen 2000), 89-139.

⁶³ Goldsworthy Lowes Dickenson, *The European Anarchy* (London, 1917), 13-7; Sylvest, 'Continuity and Change in British Liberal Internationalism', 274-8. For Dickenson's intellectual, cultural and emotional predispositions during the war, see Stuart Wallace, *War and the Image of Germany: British Academics 1914-18* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1988), 112-24.

⁶⁴ Rotter, 'Culture', 274-8. Rotter's work does engage with cause, effect and human agency in the context of culture: see Andrew J. Rotter, *Hiroshima: The World's Bomb* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

⁶⁵ For analyses of the agent-structure problem in history and international relations, see Philip Pomper, 'Historians and Individual Agency', *History & Theory*, 34 (1995), 299-319; Alexander Wendt, 'The Agent-Structure Problem in International Relations Theory', *International Organization*, 41 (1987), 335-70.

⁶⁶ Dekpat, 'Cultural Approaches' and Jackson, 'Pierre Bourdieu, the "Cultural Turn"'.

⁶⁷ William H. Sewell, for instance, in 'A Theory of Structure: Duality, Agency and Transformation', *American Journal of Sociology*, 98 (1992), 1-29, develops a theory of structure that allows for causation and change.

⁶⁸ As Timothy Blanning pointed out in this journal, Schroder defined the international system the same way other historians defined culture: 'Paul W. Schroeder's Concert of Europe', *International History Review*, 16 (1994), 701-14. Blanning's book, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture: Old Regime Europe, 1660-1789* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), is an exemplar of how to analyse the way in which cultural expressions of power buttress political power.

⁶⁹ For skeptical analyses of historiographic turns, see Gary Wilder, 'From Optic to Topic: The Foreclosure Effect of Historiographic Turns', *American Historical Review*, 117 (2012), 723-45; Nancy L. Green, 'French History and the Transnational Turn', *French Historical Studies*, 37 (2014), 551-64.

⁷⁰ The experience of the 1930s and the Second World War had done much to dampen that sense of mission and hope observed W. N. Medlicott in his 1955 inaugural lecture on assuming the Stevenson Chair at the LSE: 'The Scope and Study of International History', *International Affairs*, 31 (1955), 413-26.